

A Big Society in Yorkshire and Humber?

FINAL REPORT

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents an analysis of civil society and involvement in Yorkshire and Humber and provides a broad assessment of 'Big Society'.

In opposition and in government David Cameron has given prominence to the 'Big Society'. He has called for a *re-imagined role for the state* which is not simply about a smaller state: *we understand that the big society is not just going to spring to life on its own: we need strong and concerted government action to make it happen.*

The central themes of the Big Society include the redistribution of power from the central state to local communities and individuals, greater transparency in the information individuals have so that they can make informed decisions, and with this, greater accountability. These themes are carried forward into a case for greater social action, for the remaking of public services through not for profit organisations, and for the Big Society to reach beyond a narrow group of existing activists.

This report provides an assessment of three aspects of the Big Society in Yorkshire and Humber: power and empowerment, participation and involvement, and civil society organisations. The report draws on national datasets which can be analysed down to the local authority level. As such **the report is also interested in a fourth theme, namely place.** This report is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of indicators or statistical analysis of the drivers of a Big Society, rather it is an introduction to understanding what it might mean in different places.

Key Findings

The following are the key findings against each of the four key themes we consider.

Power and Empowerment

- **just over one quarter of people agree that they can influence local decisions;** but this ranges from over a third of people who believe this in Craven to just over one fifth in Doncaster
- on average around three per cent of people are involved in particular type of decision making group (from being a councillor to a school governor to member of a regeneration partnership); and generally involvement in decision making is in more prosperous places in the region such as North Yorkshire. **We suspect that there is evidence to support the existence of a strong civic core (possibly around six per cent of the population)**
- however, there are exceptions: for instance involvement in decision making groups is relatively high in Bradford (third placed local authority district in Yorkshire and Humber) but relatively low in York (which is ranked as having the lowest levels of decision making involvement).

Participation and Involvement

- **almost a quarter of the adult population in Yorkshire and Humberside are involved in some regular and formal type of volunteering.** The level of informal volunteering (e.g. support given freely to neighbours) is higher (around a third). According to the Citizenship Survey 2008-9 levels of both types of volunteering are lower than in a number of other regions
- **there are strong variations in the pattern of volunteering: formal volunteering (typically through a civil society organisation) is more significant in prosperous parts of the region.** Informal volunteering and caring responsibilities (for relatives) is important in more deprived areas
- **almost twenty eight per cent of households donate money to charities.** Proportionately more households in Scotland and southern and eastern England give compared with the East Midlands, North West England and Yorkshire and Humberside. There is a strong positive link between income and the propensity to give and areas where more people give to charity are not necessarily the same as those where donors give higher amounts of money.

Civil Society Organisations

- **the region has over 10,000 registered charities with a total income of £1.5 billion.** The total number of civil society organisations may be over 40,000
- however, there are considerable variations in the density of charities in the region. For example **there are five and a half times more registered charities per head of the population in Ryedale (highest concentration) than in Wakefield (lowest concentration).** The distribution tends to reflect the relative prosperity of different places
- **43 per cent of all charity income is concentrated in the two largest cities, Leeds and Sheffield.** However, in terms of the concentration of income per head of the population, the highest concentrations are in Ryedale, Sheffield and York – all over £700 per person). By contrast in North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire the figure is only just over a tenth of this (£75 per person). These figures are skewed to some extent by a few large charities with national reach, but even when these are excluded, a similar pattern remains.

Place

- **four areas are ranked in the worst 50 English local authorities (out of 354 local authority districts) in the index of multiple deprivation (Hull, Bradford, Doncaster and Barnsley).** By contrast Craven, Richmondshire and Hambleton are all in the top 100 local authorities
- the above scores mask the geographic concentration of deprivation in Yorkshire and Humber. **For example, 44 per cent of super output areas (SOAs) in Hull are ranked in the lowest 10 percent nationally.** The equivalent figures for Bradford, Doncaster, North East Lincolnshire and Sheffield are all over 20 per cent. The figures for North Yorkshire, East Riding and York are all less than three per cent.

Discussion and Conclusion

The local areas of Yorkshire and Humber provide an incredible contrast in terms of the level, density, scope and vibrancy of civil society activities and organisations. Unsurprisingly, agendas to promote a Big Society will play out very differently in different places.

This report identifies a series of key challenges for the Big Society in Yorkshire and Humber:

- ***moving beyond the civic core***: the likelihood is that around six per cent of people in Yorkshire and Humber account for around 40 per cent of civic activities (from volunteering and involvement to giving). This core tends to be drawn from more affluent groups and places; despite some specific examples to the contrary
- ***recognising pre existing organisational vulnerability***: Organisations operating in more deprived areas and with more vulnerable groups have a high proportion of their income from the public sector. These organisations may be more vulnerable to public sector cuts
- ***civic ties and social action may improve policy but are not the whole solution***: there are risks in seeing Big Society agendas around social action as an alternative to public funding to address inequality. We argue that both are required
- ***time, resources and local change***: the significance of public funding, often through local authorities and agencies, in supporting the sector varies considerably across the region from 51 per cent of civic society organisations in Hull receiving public funding to 32 per cent in North Yorkshire. Understanding the relationships and activities which lay behind this funding are an important part in understanding the different configurations of state-civil society relationships across Yorkshire and Humber.

Further and far more detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis will be required to understand the impact of the Big Society in Yorkshire and Humber. For the moment, this is a starting point.

1. Introduction

Background

This report presents an analysis of civil society and involvement in Yorkshire and Humber and provides a broad assessment of 'Big Society'. It is not an evaluation of policies, strategies, funding or actions which may promote a Big Society. Rather its focus is to consider the differences which exist between places in terms of social action. This analysis also sets out measures of social action in the context of specific places and the respective resources these areas hold.

The Emergence of an Idea

In opposition and in government David Cameron has given prominence to the 'Big Society', second only to his case for public spending cuts and the reduction of the UK's budget deficit. He has set out the case for a Big Society in a series of lectures and speeches, initially and perhaps most thoroughly in the annual Hugo Young Lecture (2009).¹ In this lecture he calls for a *re-imagined role for the state* which is not simply about a smaller state (*some reheated version of ideological laissez-faire*). Instead, *we understand that the big society is not just going to spring to life on its own: we need strong and concerted government action to make it happen* (David Cameron 2009).

Themes which have run through successive speeches on the Big Society by David Cameron have included:

- **the redistribution of power** from the central state to local communities and individuals
- **greater transparency** in the information individuals have so that they can make informed decisions
- and with this **greater accountability**.

These themes are carried forward into a case for **greater social action, for the remaking of public services through for instance the role of charities, social enterprises and notably mutuals**, and for the Big Society to reach beyond a narrow group of existing activists.

These themes are reflected strongly in the Coalition Agreement between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democratic Party (see below).²

¹ Cameron, D. (2010) *The Big Society*. The full transcript of David Cameron's Hugo Young Lecture (10 November, 2009) is available at: www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2009/11/David_Cameron_The_Big_Society.aspx

² The Coalition Agreement (May 2010) is available at: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/409088/pfg_coalition.pdf

Social Action: Extracts from the Coalition Agreement

We will take action to support and encourage social responsibility, volunteering and philanthropy, and make it easier for people to come together in their communities and help one another

We will support the creation and expansion of mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises

We will give public sector workers a new right to form employee-owned co-operatives and bid to take these over the services they deliver

We will train a new generation of community organisers and support the creation of neighbourhood groups across the UK, especially in the most deprived areas

We will take a range of measures to encourage charitable giving and philanthropy

We will introduce National Citizen Service

We will use funds from dormant bank accounts to establish a 'Big Society Bank', which will provide new finance for: neighbourhood groups, charities, social enterprises and other non-governmental bodies

We will take a range of measures to encourage volunteering and involvement in social action

From Idea to Policy

More recently the Office for Civil Society has published a strategy document *Building a Stronger Civil Society*.³ Amongst themes of devolution and transparency of information are three components seen as central to building a Big Society:

1. **Empowering Communities:** giving local councils and neighbourhoods more power to take decisions and shape their area
2. **Promoting social action:** encouraging and enabling people from all walks of life to play a more active part in society, and promoting more volunteering and philanthropy
3. **Opening up public services:** the Government's public service reforms will enable charities, social enterprises, private companies and employee-owned co-operatives to compete to offer people high quality services.

Such reforms the strategy highlights will radically re-cast the relationship between the state and charities, social enterprises and voluntary and community groups over the coming years.

Structure of this Report

This report provides an assessment of these three aspects of the Big Society, Yorkshire and Humber under the headings: **power and empowerment, participation and involvement and civil society organisations**. The report draws on national datasets which can be analysed at a local authority level (where possible to lower tier authorities). As such the report is also interested in a fourth theme, **place**. The report provides an initial baseline assessment of the Big Society, and if it's associated policy agenda is a success (in five or ten year's time as David Cameron suggests) positive change would be expected against these core indicators.

Finally, **this report is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of indicators, but rather an introduction to understanding and measuring the Big Society.**

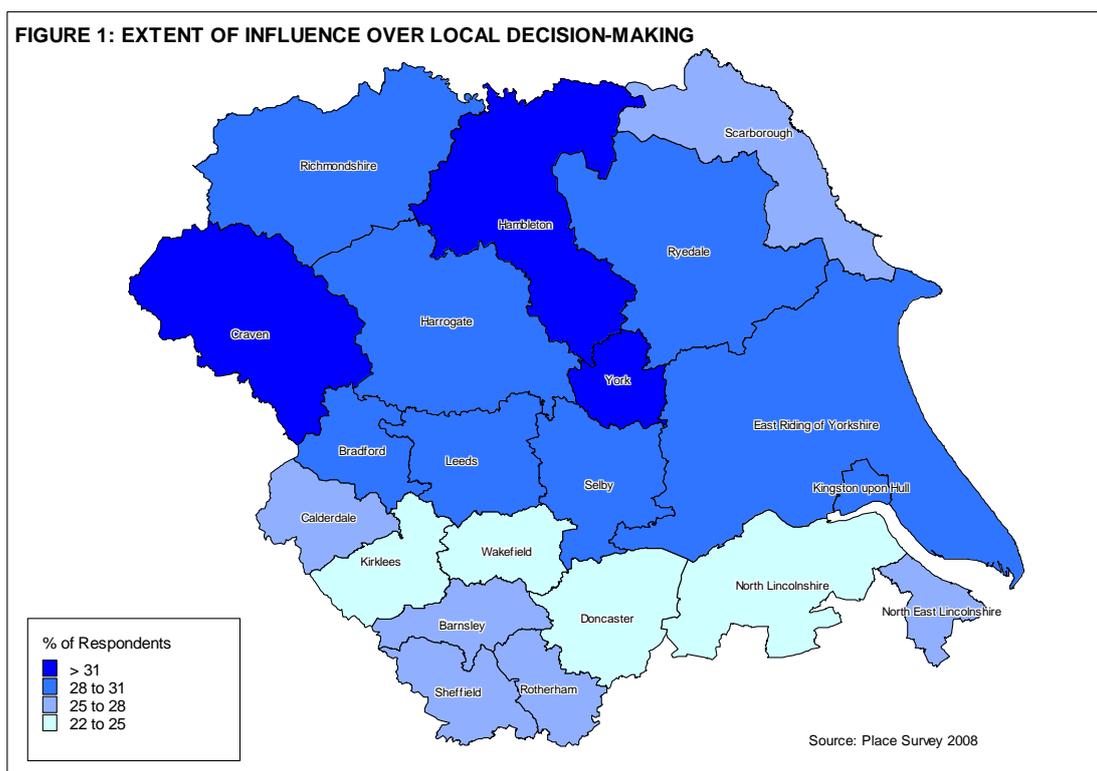
³ Cabinet Office (2010), *Building a Stronger Civil Society* is available at: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/409088/pfg_coalition.pdf

2. Power and Empowerment

The first theme we consider is that of power and specifically evidence as to the extent to which individuals believe that they can influence decisions which affect their area. A key aspect of the Big Society agenda is around localism and decentralisation: in part to local authorities but also beyond this to communities and people. To some extent these themes were part of the previous Labour government's policies around empowerment and localism, including double devolution. Perhaps as a result there has been a considerable interest in collecting measures of empowerment.

The most recent and most comprehensive dataset on empowerment comes from the 2008 Place Survey commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government.⁴ This survey contained two sets of questions relevant to empowerment:

- in terms of influence over local decision making
- involvement in local decision making groups, including being a councillor.



The above map reveals some striking differences with respect to the level of involvement in local decision making. Although the overall Yorkshire and Humber average is only slightly less than that for England, there is a considerable range in results from Craven (34 per cent) to Doncaster (22 per cent). A common reflection is

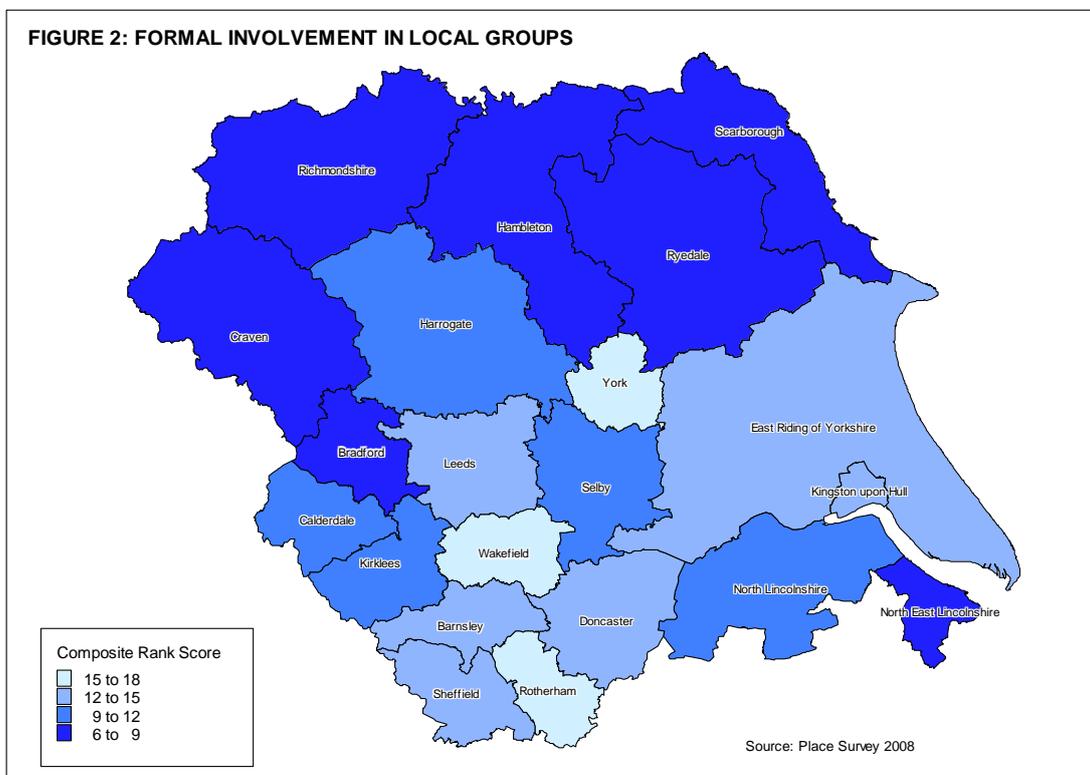
⁴ Communities and Local Government (2008), *Place Survey*. Results from the Place Survey were accessed through the Economic and Social Data Service. More details about the Place Survey are available at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/placesurvey2008

that responses for the metropolitan authorities of South and West Yorkshire are significantly lower than for district councils in North Yorkshire. There are exceptions here, notably Leeds (higher) and York (lower).

The Place Survey also asked whether people would like to be involved more in decision making. Again, the Yorkshire and Humber average (25 per cent) is slightly less than that for England (27 per cent), and there is a **considerable range of results across Yorkshire and the Humber**. However, the geographic pattern of results is less clear with all types of local authority scattered through the results.

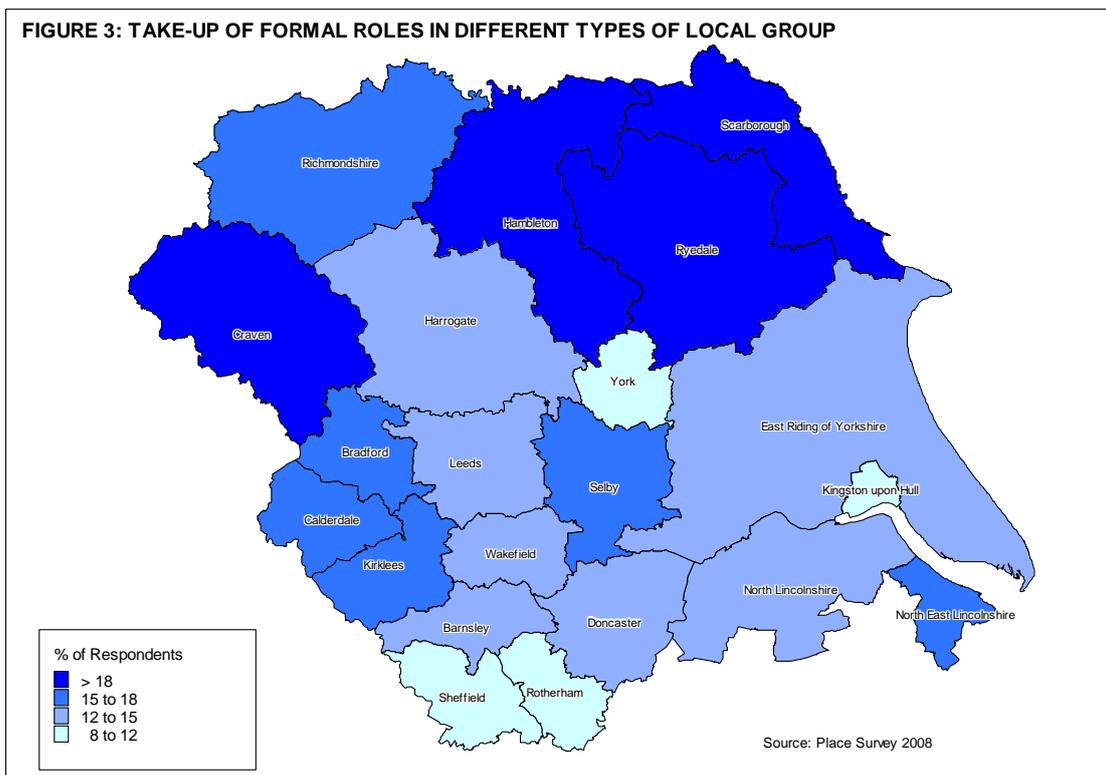
In terms of actual involvement in various decision-making groups the striking and most obvious finding is that on average across Yorkshire and Humber only around three per cent of people are involved in any particular type of group (e.g. a school governor or as a member of regeneration partnership). Again, this is slightly less than the England average. Of course, what the data do not reveal is whether individuals are members of multiple groups (suggesting that there is a 'decision making core' of little more than three per cent) or whether membership is a more 'dispersed'. If the latter were true, then total involvement would be far greater than this. **We suspect that the tendency will be towards a decision making and civic core.**

The Place Survey included questions around the following types of decision making group involvement: councillors; health and education; regeneration; crime; tenants groups; young people; other groups. An immediate comment is that opportunities to be involved in decision making will vary markedly across these different types of groups. For instance, there are relatively few opportunities to be a councillor, but more opportunities to participate in an education or health group (such as a school governor or on a patient advisory group). Similarly, it would be anticipated that there would be more regeneration groups in more deprived areas. Comparing involvement across different types of groups may therefore not be that helpful.



However, exploring variation across places reveals a general pattern of involvement, but also a couple of exceptions. We derived a composite score for each place by

ranking its position against each indicator and then taking an average of these ranks. This showed a clear split between rural North Yorkshire districts (higher involvement scores) than metropolitan and unitary authorities. **Working hypotheses may suggest that involvement is positively correlated with prosperity or that smaller, rural places have disproportionately more opportunities to participate.** The two notable exceptions are Bradford (placed third out of all Yorkshire and Humber LADs) and York (placed last). Further explanations could be proposed for these two places ranging from the role of the local authority in stimulating participation (Bradford), the likelihood that all other things being equal ethnic minorities are more likely to participate (Bradford) or that relatively new and affluent population groups are less likely to participate (York).



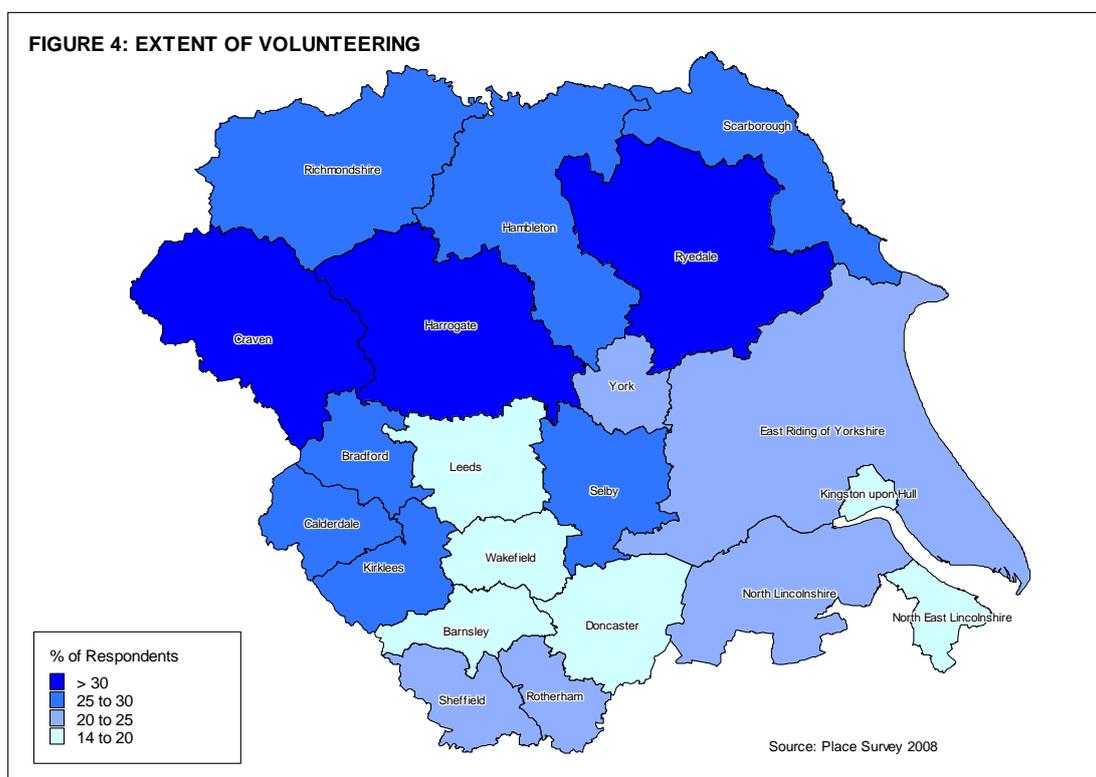
This section has reviewed evidence around the first component of the Big Society, namely around power. It is not possible to surmise whether efforts to 'shift power' would lead to an increase in the scores discussed above. Two issues are however raised by the data. **Firstly, that influence and involvement do vary from place to place, and on some indicators quite considerably so,** with some evidence that the 'Big Society' agenda of power transfer may be more readily taken up in North Yorkshire than in metropolitan authorities in West and South Yorkshire. Secondly, and this issue is returned to later, **it may be surmised that in each place there is a 'civic core' of empowered and engaged individuals and pushing beyond this may prove difficult.**

3. Participation and Involvement

The second component of the Big Society agenda explored here is that of participation and involvement: the core elements of social action. Of course social action may include many things, and to some extent is defined vaguely as *encouraging and enabling people from all walks of life to play a more active part in society*. Within social action two other areas are also included, the promotion of more volunteering and philanthropy. These are considered in turn.

The previous section discussed involvement in decision making bodies, one form of social action but also of empowerment. Of relevance here are findings from the national Citizenship Survey around volunteering.⁵

There have been extensive debates around the measurement of volunteering, for instance what counts as voluntary activity, as well as how data is collected (see for examples Gilbertson and Wilson 2009) and what the findings of the Citizenship Survey tell us about volunteering.⁶ The Citizenship Survey divides evidence on volunteering into the two categories of formal and informal volunteering. Levels of both are less than in the UK as a whole.



⁵ Communities and Local Government (2008), *Citizenship Survey*. Results from the Citizenship Survey were accessed through the Economic and Social Data Service. More details about the Place Survey are available at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/citizenshipsurveyq1201011

⁶ Gilbertson, J. and Wilson, I. (2008) Measuring participation at a local level: be careful what you ask for! *People, Place & Policy Online* v 2 n 2 pp. 78-91. Article available at: http://extra.shu.ac.uk/ppp-online/issue_2_290709/documents/measuring_participation_local_level.pdf

The above map shows the extent of formal volunteering (How often over the last 12 months have you given unpaid help to any group(s), club(s) or organisation(s)?) It shows some significant variation across the region from Craven (32.8 per cent of respondents answering who have volunteered at least monthly to Hull (14 per cent of respondents volunteering at least monthly).

Of interest to the promotion of the 'Big Society' is an understanding that there are specific types or forms of volunteering and that the motivation of volunteers varies. Unfortunately this information is not available at statistically significant levels at local authority level. However, the findings for Yorkshire and Humber are nonetheless interesting.

Figures in the 2008-9 Citizenship Survey show that nationally 26 per cent of people say they regularly undertake formal volunteering activities at least once a month, whilst 35 per cent say they regularly volunteer on an informal basis. **Rates of both regular formal and informal volunteering differ slightly according to the regions in which people live and rates are lower in Yorkshire and Humber than national figures and than in most other regions.**

In 2008-9 those living in the North East were the least likely to volunteer regularly (20 per cent) whilst people living in the South East were most likely to volunteer on this basis (32 per cent). At 23 per cent rates of regular formal volunteering for Yorkshire and Humber are at the lower end of the scale. **Regular informal volunteering is also lower in Yorkshire and Humber than in most regions.** Thirty three per cent of people living in the region say that they volunteer informally at least once per month. This compares to levels of up to 38 per cent in the South East and 36 per cent in the North West, East Midlands and the South West. Rates are lowest in the West Midlands (32 per cent) and in London (33 per cent).

Nationally the most common activities carried out by regular formal volunteers include 'organising or helping to run an event' (59 per cent) and 'raising or handling money/taking part in sponsored events' (52 per cent). A quarter of regular formal volunteers dedicate time to 'providing transport/driving' (26 per cent), 'giving information/advice/counselling' (25 per cent) and 'visiting people' (23 per cent).

Reasons for starting volunteering include wanting to improve things and help people with sixty two per cent of regular formal volunteers mentioning these motivations nationally. Regular formal volunteers felt that the cause was important to them (40 per cent) and 33 per cent wanted to 'meet new people/make friends, a similar proportion (33 per cent) started volunteering because they had spare time, while 32 per cent wanted to make use of existing skills. Twenty eight per cent of regular formal volunteers felt that there was a need in their own community. Motivations for volunteering vary by sex, age, disability, ethnicity, employment, socio-economic group and qualifications.

For example, compared with regular formal volunteers in employment, economically inactive volunteers were less likely to start volunteering to learn new skills (17 per cent compared with 21 per cent) or to use existing skills (28 per cent compared with 35 per cent). **There was no statistically significant difference in the proportions of employed relative to *unemployed* regular formal volunteers who started volunteering for these reasons.**

Regular formal volunteers from ethnic minority groups were more likely than White people who undertook formal volunteering on a regular basis to have started volunteering because of a religious belief (32 per cent compared with 15 per cent), because of a need in the community (33 per cent compared with 27 per cent), because they had received voluntary help themselves (7 per cent compared with

3 per cent), to get on in their careers (13 per cent compared with 8 per cent) or to get a recognised qualification (6 per cent compared with 3 per cent).

According to the Citizenship Survey 2008-9 almost three quarters of people (74 per cent) in England gave to charity. Rates of giving in Yorkshire and Humber are the same as those for England and comparable to the West Midlands and the East of England. Giving in the North West (73 per cent), the East Midlands (69 per cent) and London (69 per cent) is lower, whilst in the North East (75 per cent), Wales (77 per cent) and the South East (78 per cent) it is higher.

The most popular means of giving in Yorkshire and Humber (in the four weeks prior to interview) largely mirror those in England and include buying raffle tickets (27 per cent), direct debit, standing order or similar (21 per cent) and buying goods from a charity shop or catalogue (20 per cent). Other common means of donating include shop counter collection (20 per cent), sponsorship (19 per cent) and street collection (18 per cent), followed by donating at a mosque, church or other place of worship (15 per cent). Again these figures are fairly similar to national ones.

In the 2008-9 Citizenship survey amongst those giving to charity the average amount donated was £17.70. Twenty-seven per cent of people had given less than £5 while a small proportion (nine per cent) had given £50 or more. Those in higher socio-economic groups donated higher average amounts than all other groups. Those people with jobs classified as 'higher/lower managerial and professional' had given an average of £22.95 in the four weeks prior to interview, while those in 'routine occupations' had given an average of £11.89.

Amounts also varied by income level with those on higher incomes giving more on average than those on lower incomes, age (those over 26 had given higher amounts to charity on average than those aged 16 to 25) and ethnicity. **Higher amounts, on average, had been given by Pakistani (£20.97) people, Bangladeshi (£22.35) people, Black Caribbean (£21.05) people and Black African (£26.54) people compared with White people (£17.15).**

The proportion of households giving to charity varies considerably by region with households in Northern Ireland (46.2 per cent) being almost twice as likely to donate as those located in Wales, the West Midlands and North East England. **According to the national Living Costs and Food Survey (LCF) 27.7 per cent of households in Yorkshire and Humberside donated to charity in a two week spending diary period.** This compares to levels of giving of 31.7 per cent in the South West, 31.4 in the South East, 30.5 in Eastern England, 29.5 per cent in Scotland, 28.5 per cent in London and 28.2 per cent in the North West. Regions with lower levels of giving include the East Midlands 27.4 per cent, the West Midlands and Wales (both 25.1 per cent).

Differences are largely explained by variation in income and there is a strong positive link between income and the propensity to give across England, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland the importance of religion in peoples' lives is likely to increase levels of giving and proportionately more households donate to charity, regardless of income.

As well as differences between regions, differences in giving exist within regions which are masked by aggregate figures. In London for example, figures range from 23.8 per cent of households in North East London to 33.9 per cent in South West London. The pattern is different when considering the amounts donated and donors in North West London tend to give more, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of their total expenditure (over 2 per cent). Such patterns demonstrate that areas where more people give to charity are not necessarily the same as those where donors give

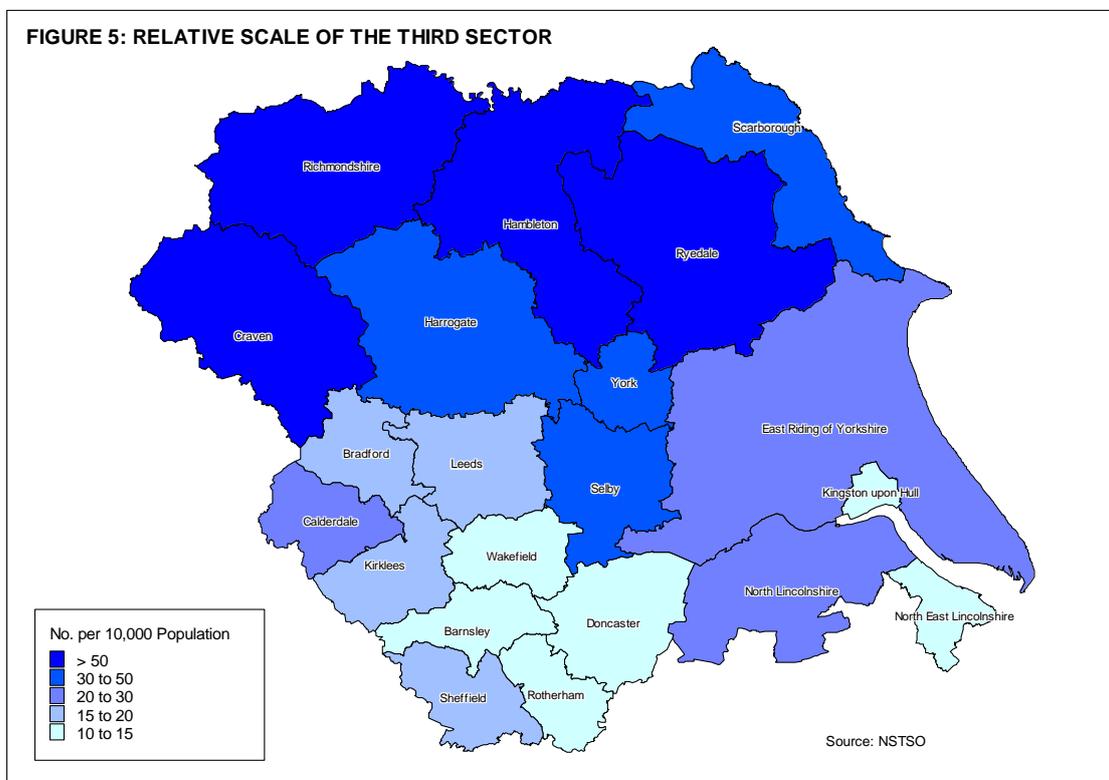
higher amounts of money. Such evidence raises questions about how to define relative levels of generosity between regions. The proportion of the local population that gives represents a different measure in terms of generosity than the percentage of income that is given by donors to charity.

On the whole the proportion of households donating across England has remained fairly steady between 2001 and 2008 and whilst participation in giving declined in some regions and increased in others, the changes are not statistically significant. One difference in giving over this period is the proportions of the population sending money abroad, which includes gifts by migrant households to people in their countries of origin. Trends are different depending on the region with marked rises in the West Midlands and Eastern England and a decline in the proportion of London households remitting money. Such changes may reflect the sharp increase in migrant workers from Eastern Europe who settled in the English regions outside London when the European Union expanded in 2004 and 2007.

Participation, volunteering and philanthropy are important themes of the Big Society. The analysis shows that there are likely to be marked differences in each of these across Yorkshire and Humber. Although these patterns will suggest that there will be greater participation and giving in North Yorkshire, it is also likely that there will be significant levels of participation and particularly giving in areas with higher proportions of Black and Asian communities, such as West Yorkshire and Sheffield. **What we have not been able to explore in detail here is whether giving is local, national or international organisations.**

4. Civil Society Organisations

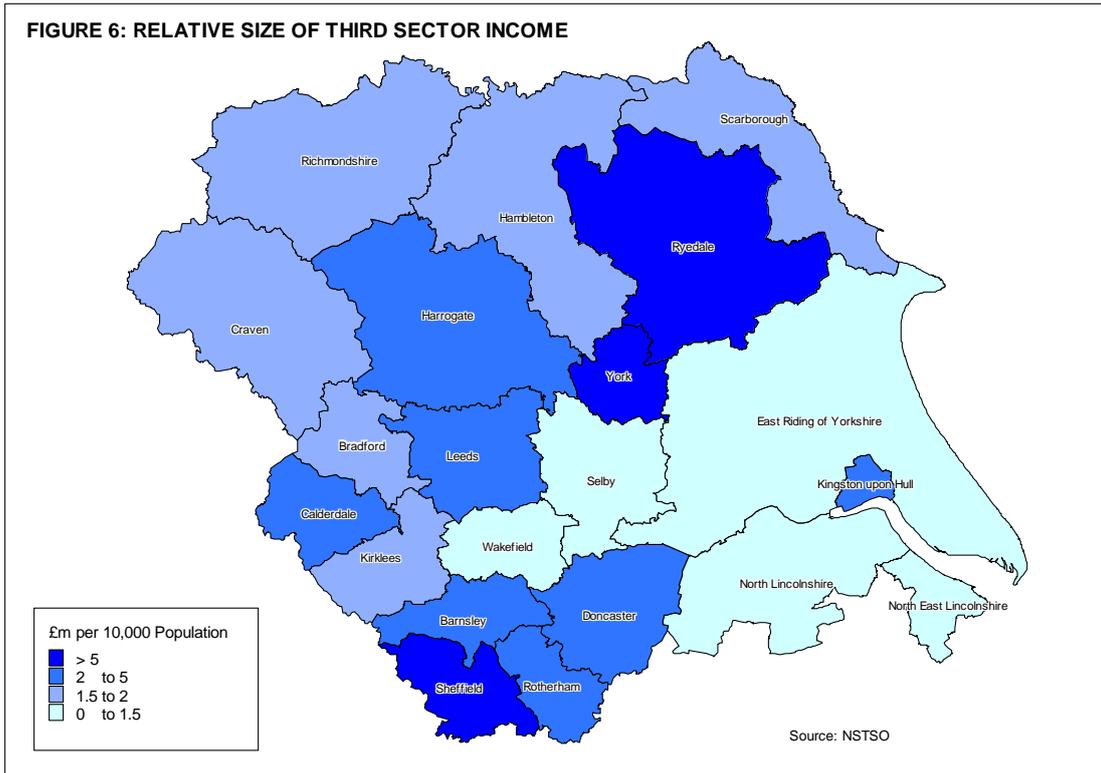
The third component of the Big Society considered here is around proposals to develop the civil society sector of co-operatives, mutuals, charities and social enterprises. The focus for this aspect of the Big Society lies in part with the development of the existing sector but also and critically the potential for it to be expanded through transferring the delivery of public services from the public sector to some form of civil society organisation. Whilst it is not possible to comment on the organisations which may be formed through the latter route, it is possible to reflect on the size, shape and form of existing civil society organisations in Yorkshire and Humber.



The above map shows the number of third sector organisations per 10,000 of the population in each of the LADs in Yorkshire and Humber. It reveals a **marked difference between Doncaster, Barnsley, Hull, Rotherham, North East Lincolnshire and Wakefield (less than fifteen organisations per 10,000 of the population) and Craven, Richmondshire, Hambleton and Ryedale (all more than 50 general charities per 10,000 of the population)**. Indeed, per head of the population there are over five times the number of charities in Craven (highest density) than in Wakefield (lowest density).⁷

⁷ Data on the population of general charities in Yorkshire and Humber was accessed from The Northern Rock Third Sector Trends Study. The Yorkshire and Humber Forum is a participating partner in this study. Original data was provided by Guidestar Data Services.

FIGURE 6: RELATIVE SIZE OF THIRD SECTOR INCOME



A further way to understand this distribution is to measure the average income of charities in each of these areas in relation to their respective populations (for instance, assuming that larger charities will tend to be located in cities). **As might be expected charity income is concentrated in Leeds and Sheffield (43 per cent of total charity income in Yorkshire and Humber), but in terms of income per 10,000 of the population, the greatest concentration of charity income is in Ryedale, Sheffield, and York (all more than £7 million per 10,000 of the population, or rather more than £700 per person).**⁸ At the opposite end of the spectrum, charities in North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire receive less than £100 per person if their areas. There are a further nine places which receive between £100-£200 per person (Bradford, Hambleton, Scarborough, Craven, Kirklees, Richmondshire, East Riding, Selby and Wakefield).

A further way to consider the distribution of civil society organisations is to consider whether some places have a greater density of particular types of charity. These patterns largely reflect the preceding analysis, with concentrations of grant making foundations and culture and recreation charities in North Yorkshire, for example.

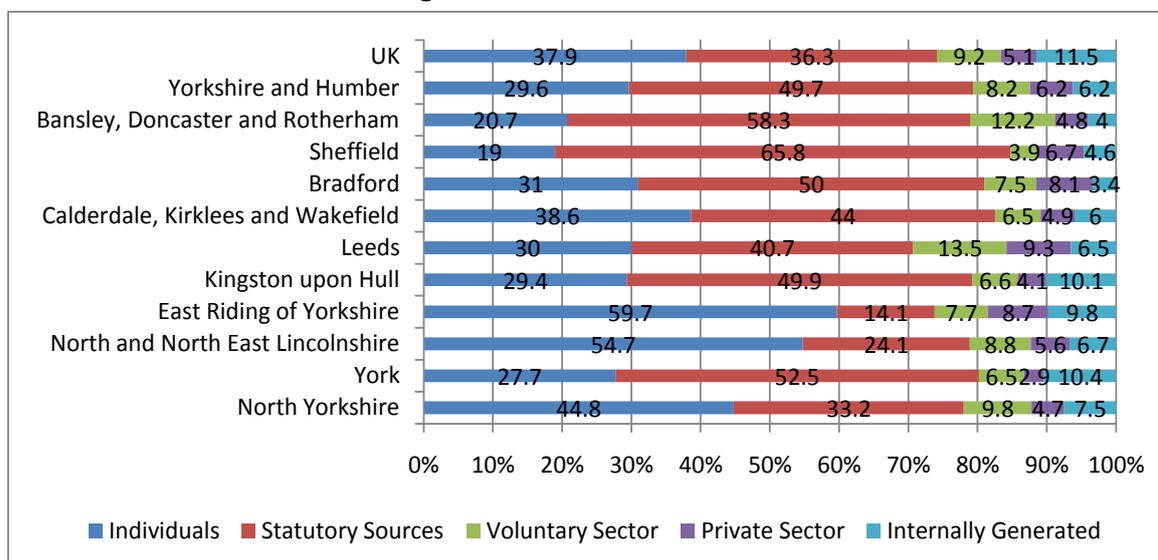
It is also worth highlighting the vulnerability of charities across Yorkshire and Humber. **Two indicators are of use here: the relative significance of difference sources of income; and the 'reserves' charities hold and which potentially could fund expenditure if external income was to cease.** These are crude measures of vulnerability and can mask factors such as the significance of a few very large charities in particular areas (for example Ufl in Sheffield) or the tendency for fundraising to be a more significant source of income in rural areas.

The following chart reveals marked contrasts in the proportion of income from statutory sources across the region. **Statutory sources of income are very significant in South Yorkshire but far less so in North Yorkshire and North and North East**

⁸ Income data for Sheffield charities is heavily skewed by the University for Industry (Ufl).

Lincolnshire; in each area individual donations account for over 50 per cent of income. The figure suggests that charities in South Yorkshire, Hull and York are likely to be harder hit by reductions in public expenditure. Work by Chris Dayson and colleagues identify different types of civil society organisation which may be more vulnerable in Yorkshire and Humber.⁹ This suggests that medium sized charities, working with disadvantaged groups are more at risk to external funding shocks than other charities.

Chart 1: Income sources of general charities in Yorkshire and Humber, 2006/07

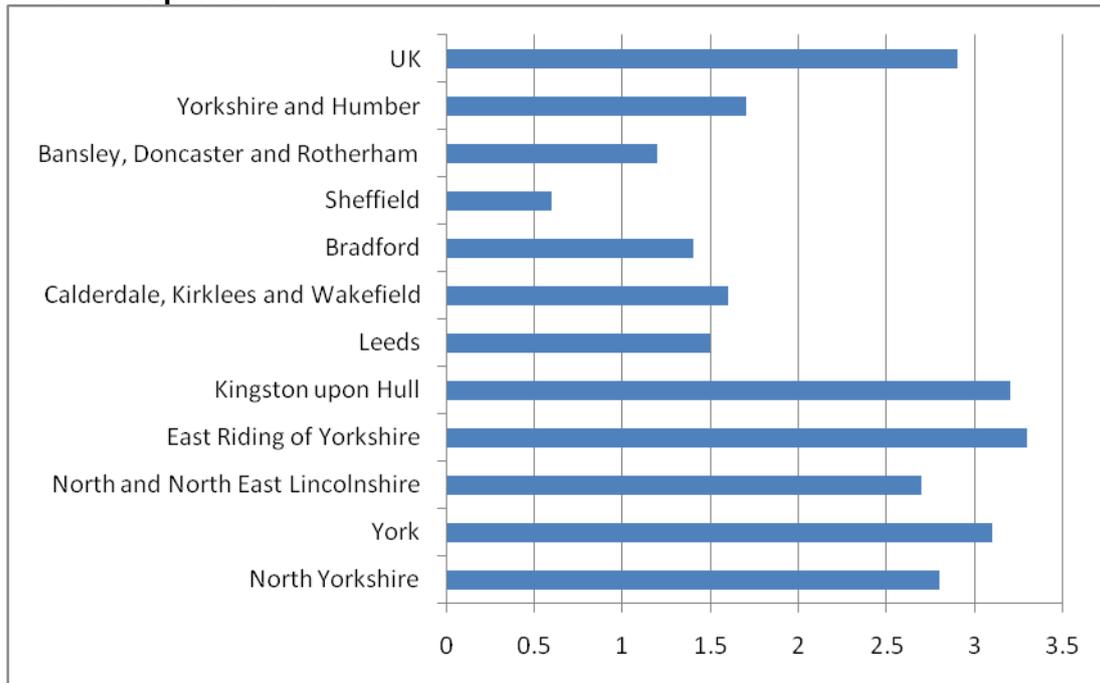


Source: Guidestar Data Services/ Northern Rock Foundation Third Sector Trends study

The following chart reveals how resilient charities in particular areas may be to adverse funding shocks. It uses the simple measure of the assets a charity holds against annual expenditure. **The findings reflect the preceding discussion: charities in South Yorkshire appear more vulnerable, although using this measure charities in Hull appear less vulnerable.** Two factors may explain this variation: the significance of Ufl in Sheffield and the existence of a few small charities in Hull holding a significant amount of assets. Notably, asset holdings by charities in the 'Humber' and North Yorkshire are all very high and at levels comparable to the UK average. The same cannot be said for West and South Yorkshire.

⁹ Dayson, C., Hems, L., Wells, P. and Wilson, I. (2009), [Impact of the Recession of the Third Sector: an initial quantitative assessment](#), (Birmingham: Capacitybuilders).

Chart 2: Funds held by general charities in Yorkshire and Humber (2006/07) - Years of expenditure



Source: Guidestar Data Services/ Northern Rock Foundation Third Sector Trends study

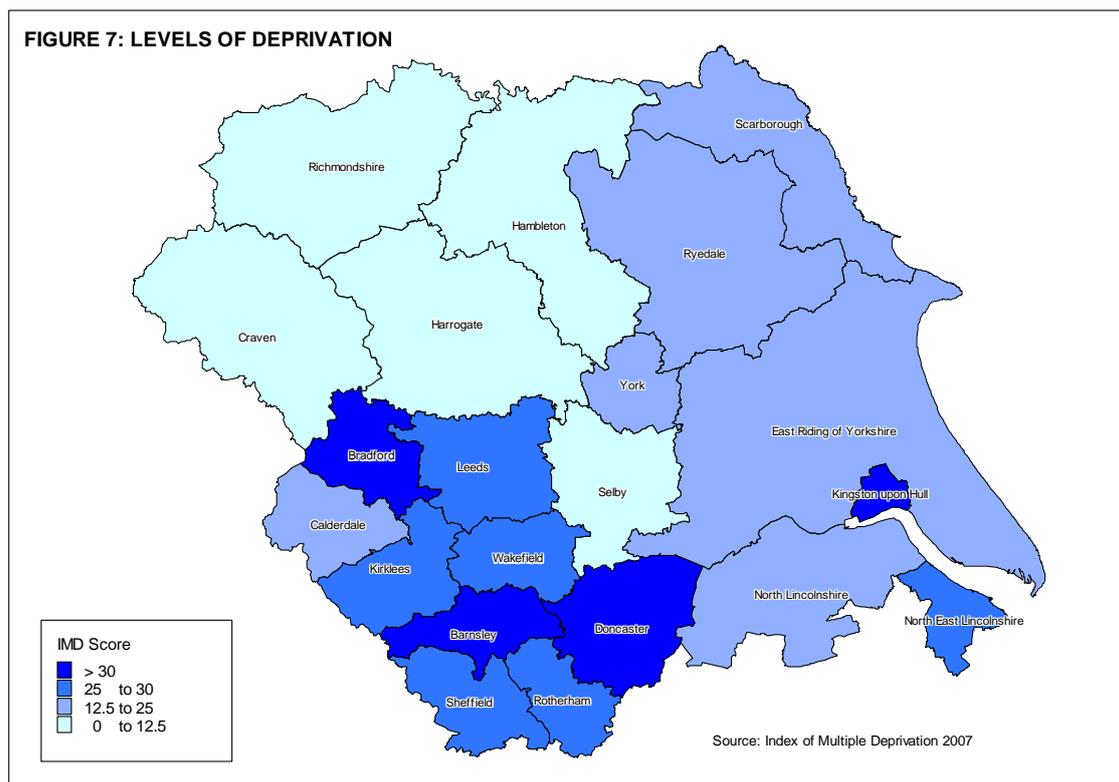
The figures provide a crude assessment of the vulnerability of charities in the region. The analysis does not include 'below the radar' organisations or the level of variation within particular places.

This section has reinforced our findings that Yorkshire and Humber contains marked contrasts in terms of its base of civil society organisations. Our analysis does not explore 'below the radar' organisations (typically small associations and clubs which do not employ staff) although we suspect, given the findings around participation and involvement, that these would tend to reflect the overall findings of **greater concentrations of civil society activity in North Yorkshire and in the main cities of Leeds, Sheffield and Bradford.**

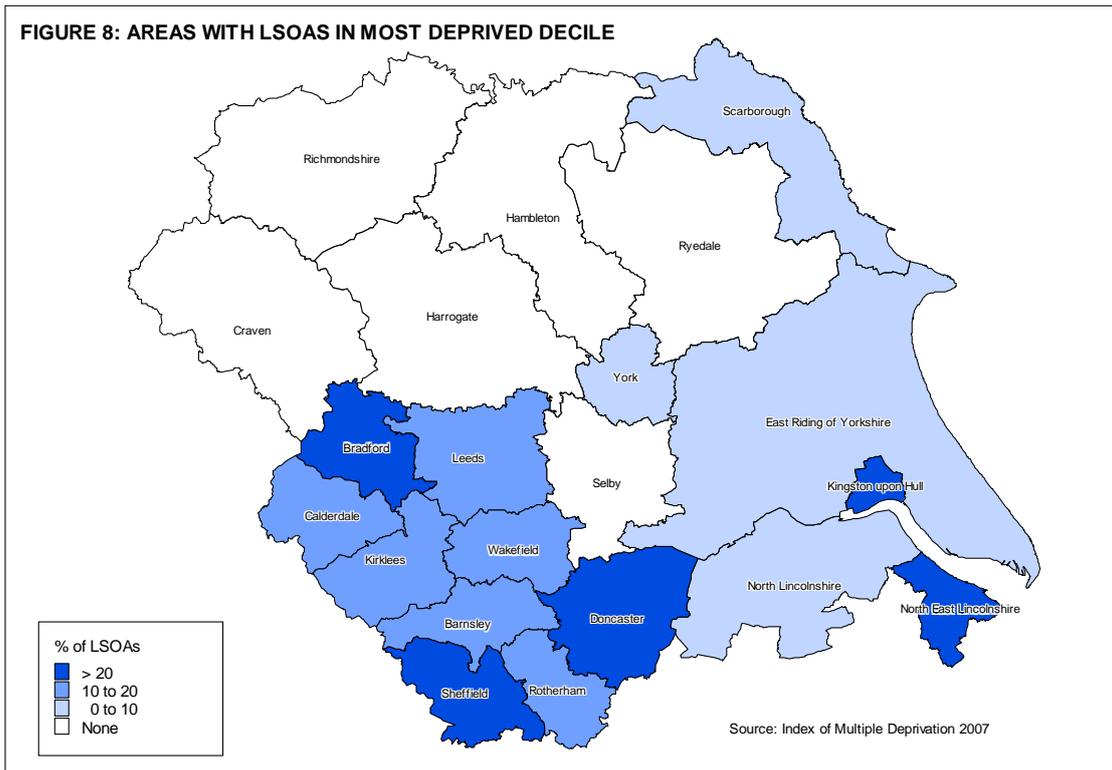
5. Place

Throughout this report we have highlighted the strong variation between places in Yorkshire and Humber in terms of headline indicators of civil society. This section puts the preceding evidence in the context of a series of measures around prosperity and deprivation, primarily using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). We undertook this analysis at two levels, firstly for the local authority districts and secondly on the concentration of most and least deprived 'super output areas' within each local authority district.

The following map shows the IMD score for each upper tier local authority district in Yorkshire and Humber. **Hull, Doncaster, Bradford and Barnsley have the highest IMD scores and York, East Riding and North Yorkshire have the lowest IMD scores.** Unsurprisingly, this reveals a strong relationship between relative prosperity and the strength of 'Big Society'. In terms of the concentration of the least deprived super output areas and a strong Big Society, a similar relationship is revealed.



The above scores mask the geographic concentration of deprivation in Yorkshire and Humber. **For example, 44 per cent of super output areas (SOAs) in Hull are ranked in the lowest 10 per cent nationally.** The equivalent figures for Bradford, Doncaster, North East Lincolnshire and Sheffield are all over 20 per cent. **The figures for North Yorkshire, East Riding and York are all less than three per cent,** as is shown by the following map.



Of course, there are variations across Yorkshire and Humber. **Of greatest concern is the narrow base of 'Big Society' in places such as Barnsley, Wakefield, Doncaster, North and North East Lincolnshire and Hull.** The expectation is that civil society in all the forms discussed here will help to fill gaps in the absence of public sector support. Given the starting point for these areas, this would appear to be a very tall order. The larger cities in Yorkshire and Humber, Sheffield, Leeds and Bradford whilst facing high levels of deprivation, do at least start from a position of a relatively broad base of civil society activity, albeit still less than the more prosperous parts of Yorkshire and Humber.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The local areas of Yorkshire and Humber provide an incredible contrast in terms of the level, density, scope and vibrancy of civil society activities and organisations. Unsurprisingly, agendas to promote a Big Society will play out very differently in different places. Equally, it cannot be assumed that areas which appear to have weak or few civil society activities and organisations cannot be engaged effectively in this policy agenda; although we suspect that it would be considerably harder.

The following reflects on the evidence presented in this report and **outlines key challenges for the Big Society policy agenda in Yorkshire and Humber.**

Moving Beyond the Civic Core

Research in Canada by Reed and Selbee (2001) has shown that there is a remarkable concentration of civic involvement, in terms of volunteering, giving to charity and participation in civic organisations.¹⁰ This they term the civic core with as few as six per cent of Canada's population contributing between 35 and 42 per cent of Canada's civic activities.

Our analysis here drew on separate datasets around these issues, and as such cannot replicate these authors' work. Nonetheless, **what evidence that does exist, and what we know more broadly about civic participation in the United Kingdom, suggest that there is almost certainly a civic core in existence across Yorkshire and Humber.** What our findings point to is that this civic core may also vary from place to place and be more prevalent in affluent areas; with of course some notable exceptions in more deprived areas.

Reed and Selbee raise a series of issues for policy makers around their civic core findings. The first is that **it would appear that it is difficult to dramatically change the size of the civic core**; the majority of the population remain outside this core and engage in civic activities on a far more piecemeal and ad hoc basis. The second issue is to **more fully accept the existence of the civic core and understand how it may be engaged more effectively.** Nonetheless, there are clearly spatial differences which policy makers should consider.

Recognising Pre Existing Organisational Vulnerability

The analysis presented is essentially a static one. It shows differences in the concentration of civil society organisations from place to place. We also suggest that **organisations in certain places may be far more vulnerable to external changes**; in particular cuts in public spending but also in the way organisations are funded. We discuss this in terms of reserve levels and the concentration of public sector funding as indicators of vulnerability. **Previous approaches to funding certain activities in civil society organisations, notably around regeneration, employment support or welfare may have generated a growth in, and a base of, organisations which**

¹⁰ Reed, P.B. and Selbee, L.K. (2001), 'The Civic Core in Canada: Disproportionality in Charitable Giving, Volunteering, and Civic Participation', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, v. 30 n. 4 pp. 761-780.

cannot be sustained in an era of greatly reduced public spending. The map of the concentration of charities and charitable income may undergo remarkable changes over a relatively short time period. Work by Chris Dayson and colleagues identify different types of civil society organisation which may be more vulnerable in Yorkshire and Humber.¹¹ More recent work by David Clifford and colleagues **finds evidence that organisations in more deprived neighbourhoods receive a higher proportion of their funding from the public sector.**¹²

Civic Ties and Social Action May Improve Policy, but are not the whole solution

Discussions around the Big Society have made much of the failure of state-led and 'top-down' approaches to stimulate civil society, especially in the context of the regeneration of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. To some extent, this dichotomy is a false one; more recent state-led approaches to regeneration through Area Based Initiatives (ABIs) such as the Single Regeneration Budget but especially New Deal for Communities made much of the 'community dimension' and the potential of boosting 'social capital'.

As the evaluation of New Deal for Communities showed, however, **headline measures of social capital failed to move considerably and evidence of significant people based outcomes (jobs, education and health) was relatively modest in comparison to place based changes (crime, physical environment and neighbourhood attractiveness).**¹³ The recent RSA Connected Communities report suggests that the failure of ABIs in this regard, including NDC, was that community engagement and community engagement were of second order importance to the need to spend financial resources and achieve externally set targets.¹⁴

The RSA report argues that policies, including ABIs, would be greatly improved by an understanding of social networks, and that these cross geographic boundaries. **The design and implementation of ABIs, it counters would be improved not just through better measurement of social networks, but more importantly through actively engaging them in the implementation of policy.** These are important lessons, although they continue to suggest that mobilisation of civic ties will solve problems, for instance in finding a job or improving job prospects. This would appear to neglect the wider geographic contexts of many disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Yorkshire and Humber. In particular, **civic ties may be part of the policy solution but they cannot resolve material poverty and wider issues such as the weak demand for labour.**

Time, Resources and Changing the Local State

This report has argued that the policy agenda for the Big Society may, of course, play out differently from one place to the next. Indeed, the associated agenda of localism would very much encourage and expect such variation. **Little attention is given to the timeframes over which change is expected or that some areas may require longer and more resources to effect such change.**

¹¹ Dayson, C., Hems, L., Wells, P. and Wilson, I. (2009), [Impact of the Recession of the Third Sector: an initial quantitative assessment](#), (Birmingham: Capacitybuilders).

¹² Clifford, D., Geyne Rajme, F. and Mohan, J. (2010), *How dependent is the third sector on public funding? Evidence from the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations*. TSRC Working Paper 45.

¹³ The full set of NDC evaluation reports is available here: http://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/ndc_reports_02.htm

¹⁴ Rowson, J., Broome, S. and Jones, A. (2010), *Connected Communities: How social networks power and sustain the Big Society*. Accessed from: www.thersa.org/projects/connected-communities

Evidence from the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO, 2009) included a question (*Taking everything into account, overall, how do the statutory bodies in your local area influence your organisation's success?*) from which was derived a score for local authority districts. This was used as the **baseline measure for National Indicator 7 (NI7) on a Thriving Third Sector**. The results from this highlight the relationship between the local state (local authority but also other public sector agencies) and the voluntary and community sector. They also provide a measure of the health of this relationship. **Overall the score for Yorkshire and Humber is around 16 per cent but with variation from 13.5 per cent (Barnsley) to 20.4 per cent (Hull).**

What is striking about the variation in results for Yorkshire and Humber local authorities is that, unlike previous sections of this report, there are no obvious groupings of local authorities by type or relative prosperity. Analysis of the survey data at a national level suggests that a series of drivers are at play, including the ability of organisations to influence decisions, the state of current relationships, the value the statutory sector places in the third sector and the satisfaction of support. To some extent these are not mutually exclusive questions, and also reflect some weaknesses in NI7 as an indicator.¹⁵ Although important for providing a national summary of key drivers, local factors also appear to play a strong part.

Further research on the NSTSO dataset is more revealing. Research by David Clifford and colleagues at the TSRC, shows that **there are considerable differences in the proportion of organisations receiving funding from the state.**¹⁶ This ranges from Hull (51 per cent of organisations) through to North Yorkshire (32 per cent). Regardless of the scale of this funding, it shows hugely significant differences between the role of the state (largely at a local level) and civil society organisations.

In some places there appears considerable independence (East Riding and North Yorkshire have fewer than 35 per cent organisations funded by the state in some way) in comparison to Hull, Doncaster, Sheffield, Calderdale, Bradford, Leeds, Rotherham, North East Lincolnshire and Barnsley where over 40 per cent of organisations are state funded. The national average is 36 per cent. Understanding these relationships, beyond issues of funding will be important for understanding the role of the state in stimulating a Big Society.

Conclusion

Alongside public sector cuts and localism, the Big Society may become a defining theme of the Coalition Government. Indeed to a large extent they go hand-in-hand and are part of a redefinition of the role of the state in civic life.

This report has sought to provide an initial, largely quantitative assessment of the Big Society in Yorkshire and Humber. **It finds considerable variation between places especially in terms of the scale and extent of civil society.** Such variation should raise some concern for policy makers, perhaps not unexpected, as to the reception of the Big Society.

Further and far more detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis will be required to understand the impact of the Big Society in Yorkshire and Humber. For the moment, this is a starting point.

¹⁵ See Ipsos MORI (2009), *National Survey of Third Sector Organisations, Analytical Report: Key Findings from the Survey*.

¹⁶ Clifford, D. et al, (2010) Op cit.